

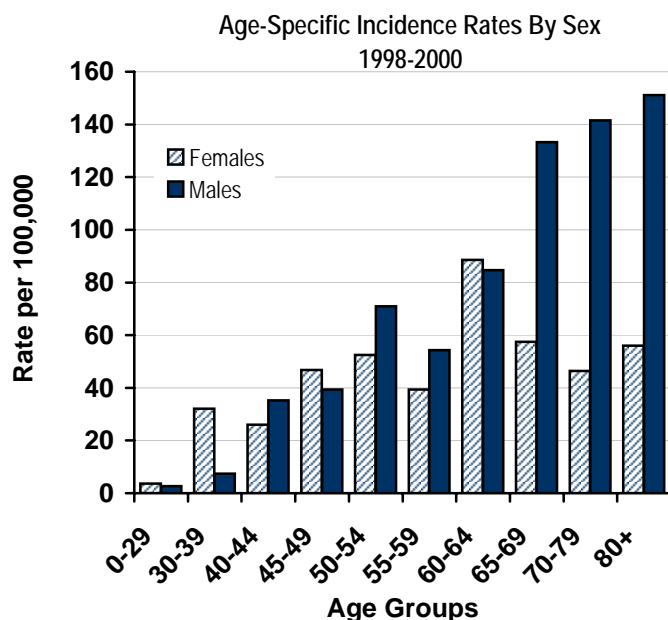


Melanoma of the Skin

Clark County and Washington State, 1994 through 2001

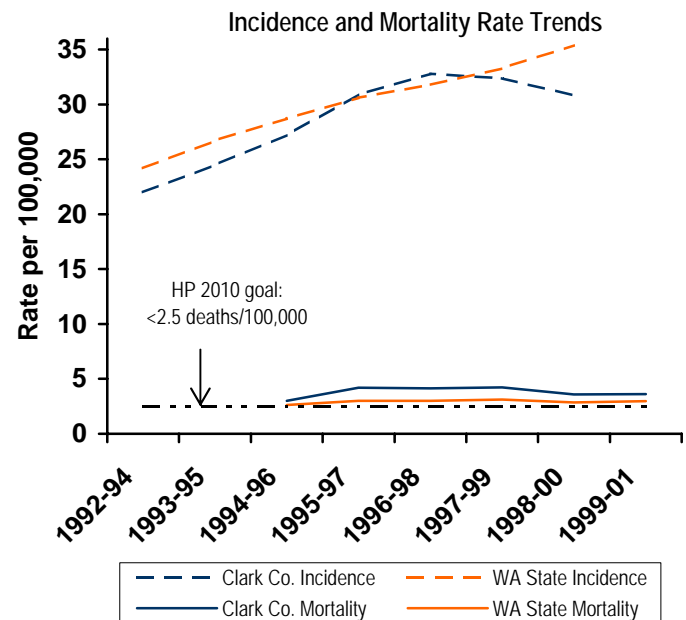
Why we should care:

Skin cancer is the most common form of cancer.(1) There are two types of skin cancer: melanoma and nonmelanoma skin cancer. (2) This data sheet deals with the more serious form of skin cancer called melanoma. While melanoma accounts for about 4% of all cases of skin cancer it accounts for almost 79% of the deaths due to skin cancer.(2) In 2003 there will be an estimated 54,000 new cases of melanoma and 7,600 deaths due to melanoma in the United States.(2)



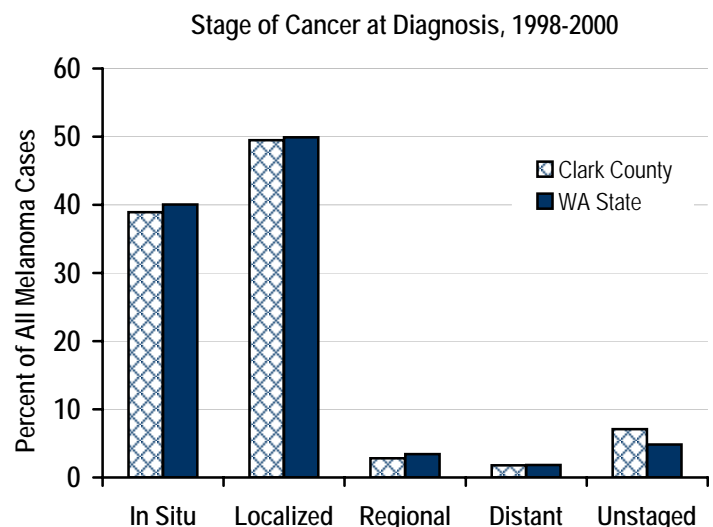
What we can do :

- Avoiding exposure to the sun or other sources of ultraviolet (UV) rays is the best way to reduce the risk of melanoma. This includes: (a) limiting the amount of time spent outdoors (especially in the middle of the day); (b) using sufficient amounts of sunscreen with an SPF factor of 15 or higher and reapplying sunscreen every two hours even on partially cloudy days; (c) avoiding tanning beds and sun lamps.(2)
- People who have suffered sunburns as young children or teenagers are at increased risk of melanoma.(2) To lower the risk in this age group we can encourage policies in schools that reduce childhood exposure to UV radiation and provide education to students and their parents on sun protection.(7)
- Making skin examinations a part of routine self exams and physical examinations by health care providers may allow the early detection of melanoma, thus improving the chances of cure.(2)



Status:

- Clark County's overall melanoma incidence rate has risen since 1992-93. However, as the incidence rate continues to increase in Washington State, Clark County rates have declined slightly since 1997-99. Melanoma incidence increases with age for both sexes but is particularly common among older men both in Clark County and the state. (3)
- The majority of diagnosed melanoma cases were identified in the earlier stages of the cancer.(3)
- While neither the State nor Clark County have reached the Healthy People 2010 goal of no more than 2.5 melanoma deaths per 100,000, the death rates have remained relatively low and constant between 1994-96 and 1999-01. This indicates the presence of effective screening and treatment opportunities. (4,5,6)





Melanoma of the Skin Incidence and Mortality
Clark County and Washington State, 1992-1994 through 1999-2001

Period	Clark County				Washington State			
	Incidence Rate	No. of Cases	Death Rate	No. of Deaths	Incidence Rate	No. of Cases	Death Rate	No. of Deaths
1992-94	22.0	53	NMF***	-	24.2	1,193	NMF***	-
1993-95	24.5	62	NMF***	-	26.7	1,345	NMF***	-
1994-96	27.2	72	3.0	21	28.7	1,482	2.6	395
1995-97	30.9	85	4.2	32	30.6	1,616	3.0	462
1996-98	32.8	95	4.1	34	31.8	1,714	3.0	471
1997-99	32.4	96	4.2	36	33.3	1,830	3.1	500
1998-00	30.8	94	3.6	32	35.4	1,987	2.9	469
1999-01	NA***	NA***	3.6	33	NA***	NA***	3.0	498

Technical notes

Rates:

- Much of public health assessment involves describing the health status of a defined community by looking at changes in the community over time or by comparing health events in that community to events occurring in other communities or the state as a whole. In making these comparisons, we need to account for the fact that the number of health events depends in part on the number of people in the community. To account for growth in a community or to compare communities of different sizes, we usually develop rates to provide the number of events per population unit. The following rates are most commonly used:
 - Crude mortality rates, or death rates, are calculated by dividing the number of deaths due to a certain cause by the population in which the deaths are occurring in a specified period of time such as one year.
 - Age-adjusted death rates are calculated to allow comparisons of death rates between two populations at the same time or the same population at different times. The age-adjustment process removes differences in the age composition of two or more populations to allow comparisons between these populations independent of their age structure.
 - Incidence is a way of measuring the risk of a disease in a population. An incidence rate is calculated by dividing the number of new cases of a disease by the population in which the disease is occurring in a defined period of time (e.g. one year) and multiplying this number by 100,000.

Other technical notes:

- * Rate per 100,000 deaths adjusted using the 2000 U.S. Standard Population; deaths coded using ICD 10.
- **NMF = no meaningful figures. Deaths prior to 1994 cannot be accurately recoded using the ICD 10 system and therefore are not considered in these analyses.
- ***NA = data not available at time of printing.

Sources

(1) U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Centers for Disease Prevention and Control. 2003. *Skin Cancer: Preventing America's Most Common Cancer, 2003*. Retrieved May 2003 from <http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/nscep/skin.htm>. (2) American Cancer Society. [n.d.] *Cancer Reference Information: What is Melanoma Skin Cancer?* Retrieved on June 10, 2003 from http://www.cancer.org/docroot/CRI/CRI_2_3x.asp?dt=39. (3) Washington State Cancer Registry Data Online, Cancer Incidence Data, 1992-2000. Olympia, WA: Washington State Department of Health, Washington State Cancer Registry. Retrieved from <http://www3.doh.wa.gov/WSCR/ASP/WSCRQry.asp> in May 2003. (4) Vital Registration System, Annual Statistics Files, Deaths 1980-2001. [Data file]. Olympia, WA: Washington State Department of Health, Center for Health Statistics. (5) Public Health: Seattle & King County, Epidemiology, Planning, & Evaluation. (1991-2003). VistaPHw (Version 3.1.1) [Computer software for public health assessment]. Seattle, WA. (6) U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Healthy People 2010 Objective 3-8: reduce the rate of melanoma cancer deaths to no more than 2.5 deaths per 100,000 males. Washington, DC: January 2000. (7) U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Centers for Disease Prevention and Control. National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. The National Skin Cancer Prevention Education Program. 2003. *Melanoma and Skin Cancer Awareness*. Retrieved on June 10, 2003 from <http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/nscep/awareness.htm>.